



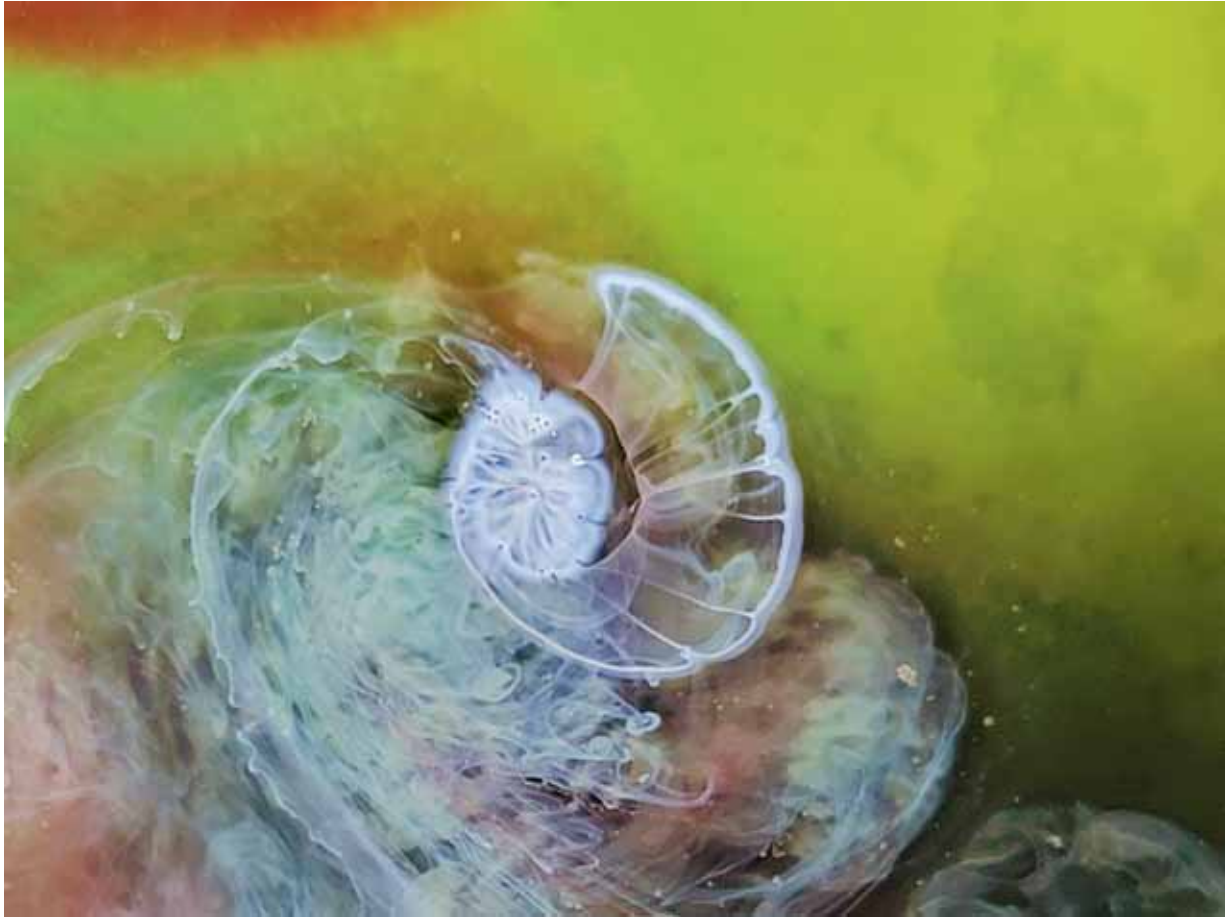
**Bones**  
journal for the short verse

no. 24  
October 2022

open door  
an unliftable sun crashes down  
on the doormat

mayfly  
in the same skin  
it danced in

a white octopus  
sat on the seabed  
after the eulogy



Julie Schwerin

tent pitched a nightingale's high notes

*graduation*

cotton seeds  
in wind—

a jaybird nest  
decorated

with fledgling  
feathers

tongue-taste the milkwhite of a lazy eye



violets uprooted  
from the wolf's throat —  
galaxies

ovulating the turtle a time traveler



Beate Conrad - Ways of Light 01

butterfly passing through particles of me

from state to state the obvious

in time the ash contains the urn

marsh grass in a swirl beyond dogma

trust the end of the rope's other end



### *The idea*

is to carry a big clock that ticks loudly and adds cinematic tension to whatever depressing documentary my life has become.

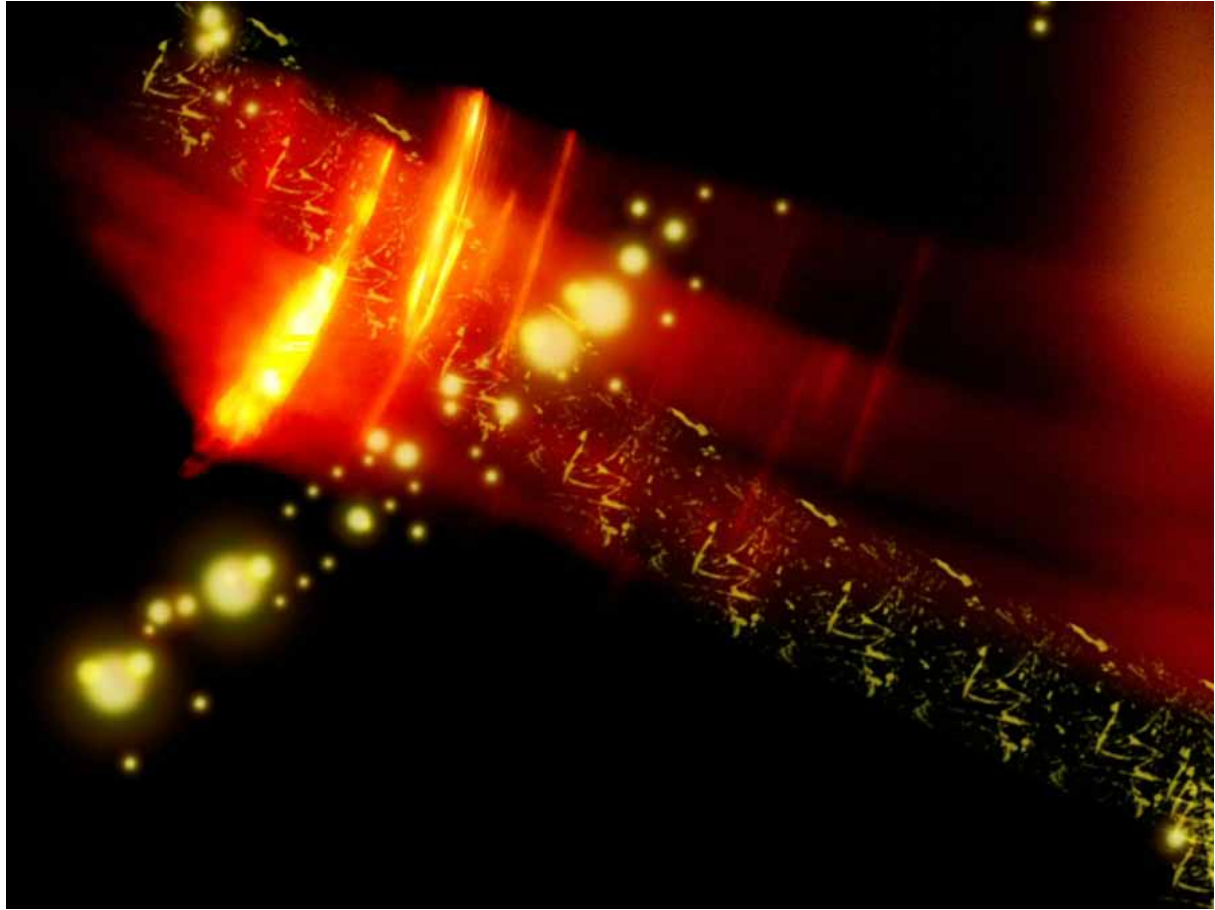
empty parking lot  
an ocean of puddles  
rippling in the wind

***IF MY MUSE WERE A WHORE***

in the tawdry red-light district  
of my head, I'd pay whatever she  
might ask for the poem she hides  
behind her scarlet lips and swears  
she's saved for me alone

a wave tests the depth of the ocean with its foot

Two days ago, the littlest one sprouted gills.  
They are repulsive.  
We can't stop placing our lips on them.



Beate Conrad - Ways of Light 02

## ***NOEMA***

God is a number that enters like a pebble rattling against glass. Where there are impurities—a slight curvature of phenomena.

diacritical marks within the sky's blue anvil

buttering the nooks and crannies of optimism

dry lakebeds pay-per-view



crows stop morning off their meds

sky-blue  
letters on the IV tube  
waiting for her eyes

- 4 eyes
- 3 alive with seeing
- 2 mine
- 1 reptilian reflection

frustrating his death makes her a window

the stream empties some of it here asking again

as if a lake I come to for its calm summer night

a fallen tree snagged by another marriage

the sea  
my eyes aren't enough





Beate Conrad - Ways of Light 03

the acrid music of the false concierge at dawn

the ink smudge a tousled mountain range where I will live

of course this you is a piece of black paper

I can make myself anything but this octopus escape

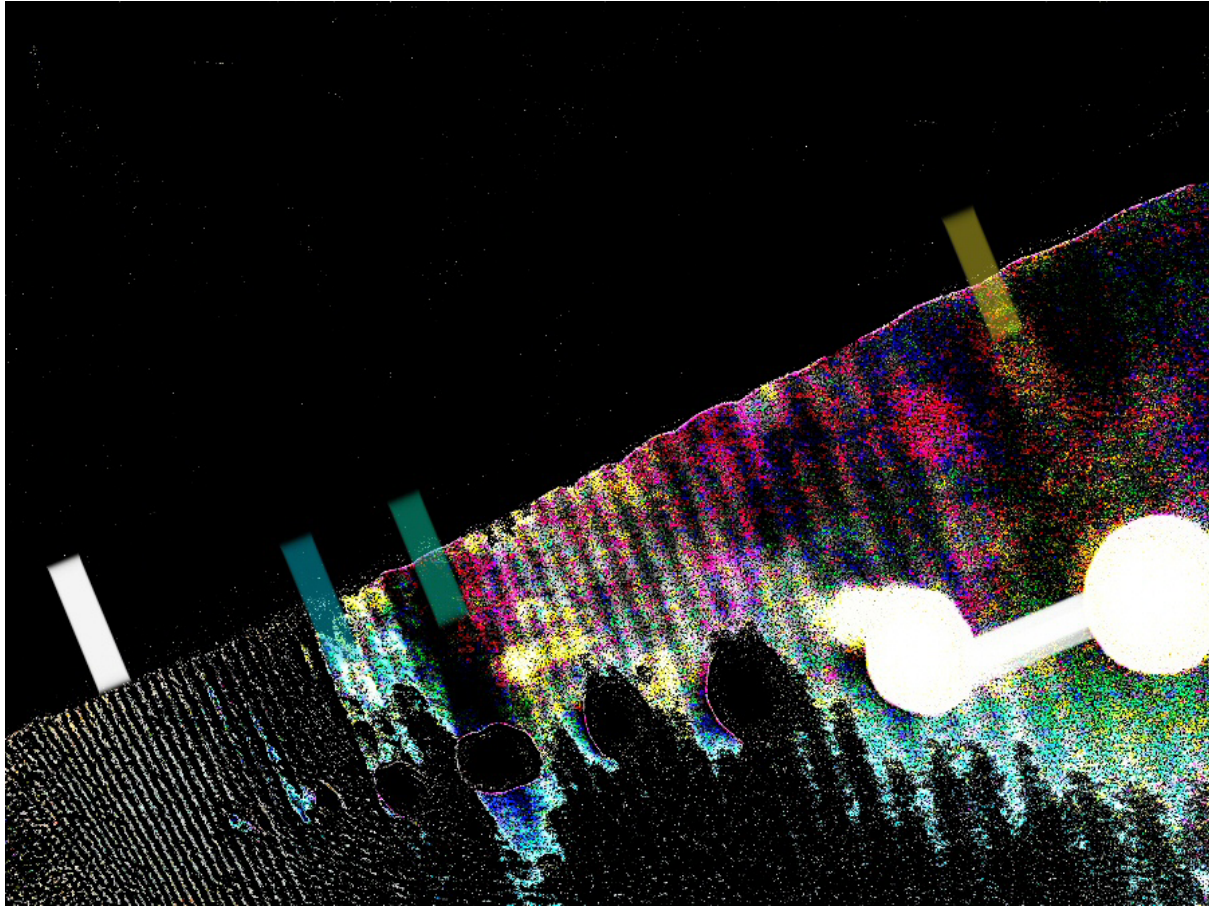
up and down hills like rustic bread we keep the elixir safe

with her glorious hips the sweaty moon breaks every plate

ripples  
cobble  
pebble



dawn white silent  
warm sunlit listen  
moon white insist



Beate Conrad - Ways of Light 04

## *Pluto Rediscovered*

Emerging from the underground into the light he announces, 'there's a strawberry'

wrong fruit  
just one bite  
would clinch it

She has a birthmark just a birthmark no more than a birthmark top marks nevertheless..

trust  
the meanings  
of the word trust

## *Pluto Rediscovered*

Falling back and back and back as far as a universe but just how far can an ant trail stretch.

a ravine  
is a ravine  
is a ravine

It may be just a balcony to you but a whole career really depends on merely a wherefore.

wheelbarrows  
of fallen petals  
tears weren't enough

***Fibonacci Poem for the Great God Pan***

Pan  
can  
keep his  
goat-boy self  
to hisself. Boy tries  
to pipe up my skirt 'n charm down  
my honey bucket, suspectin' he might could fill it,  
I'll knock his goat-boy behind out de door 'n into next week 'n say: "Pan, meet  
Skillet!"

*All the Pretty Horses*

She dreams herself a tender calf  
among cattle by mistake,

lined up for hammer and knife,  
filling her final moments

cracking jokes at the expense  
of pretty horses, pampered and dull.

doing this well

but the sit of sun behind her back



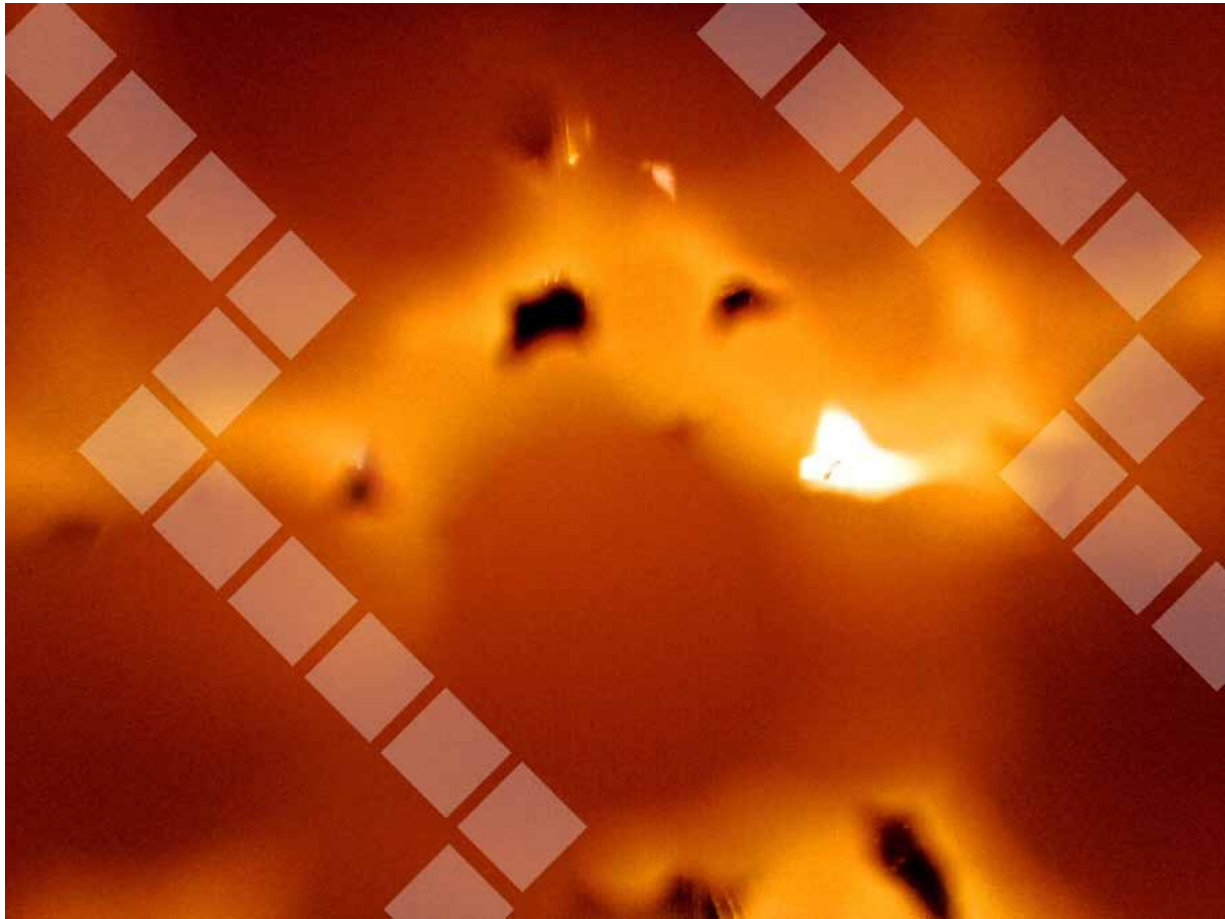
looks like and is holding back still

once  
we're off

to live  
on

while she's that way she's always

all that nightfall depending on who it is at the door



Beate Conrad - Ways of Light 05

colonizing anxiety apricot tree in bloom

a spare moment filling it with a blank page

mountainside of stumps the weekend paper obit section



winter moon

*all the earth*

the light-fingered  
touch

*lost within  
the to  
and fro*

of being  
known

*of identity*

crawling out  
of winter

*Bloomin' Dublin*

the gnarled limbs

*the wonder  
of language*

of my other  
life

*wanderin' home*

footprints left behind recollected by hourglass

I awaken

*against the adulteration*

to feel emptiness

*of childlike wonder*

yanked out of me

*my lipids are steeled*

startling light

*traces of*

a flicker flutters

*the physiognomy*

in the void

*of darkness*



Hansha Teki

a chance glance

*for heaven's sake*

into the origin

*a tuatara's lunge*

of being

*at self-awareness*

lifeless leaves

*being now*

how implacably  
my skin

*the am  
which  
will have been*

has grown old

*becoming*



a child places

*wild winds*

a finger  
to her lips

*writing  
the wrongs*

while God  
whispers

*in a wordless  
language*

wolf hour

*brow-beaten  
by night*

the mind of Christ  
blooms

*my self-image*  
in my garden

*sweats blood*

I am being here now for the time being

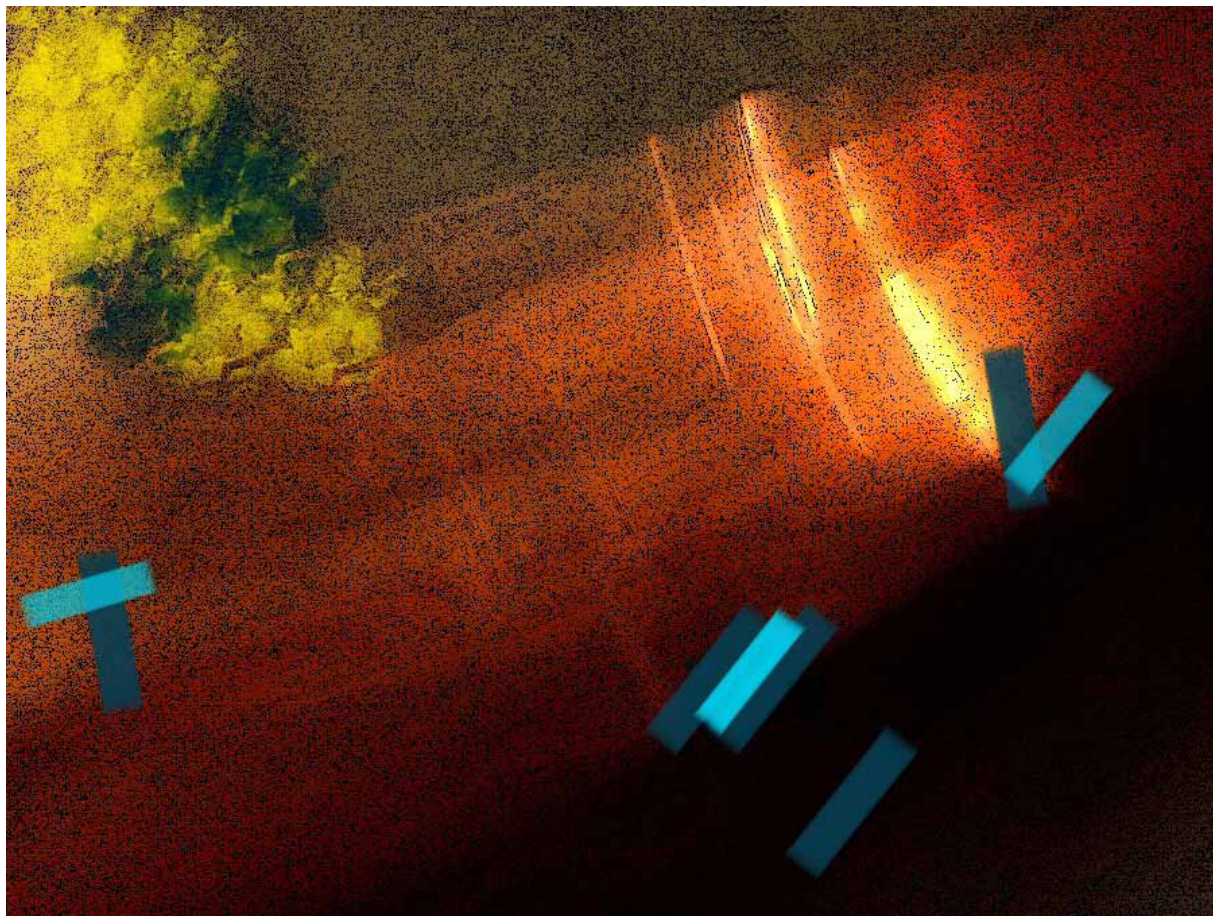
Dew on a mayfly for the time being

Word made flesh again for the time being

Hawking an event horizon for the time being

Originating species for the time being

sunset begins with a Level Red mist



Beate Conrad - Ways of Light 06

quantum entanglement  
Afghanistan our damned

self bee leaf

ripples too dark to sea



type (A) round the clock running in circles

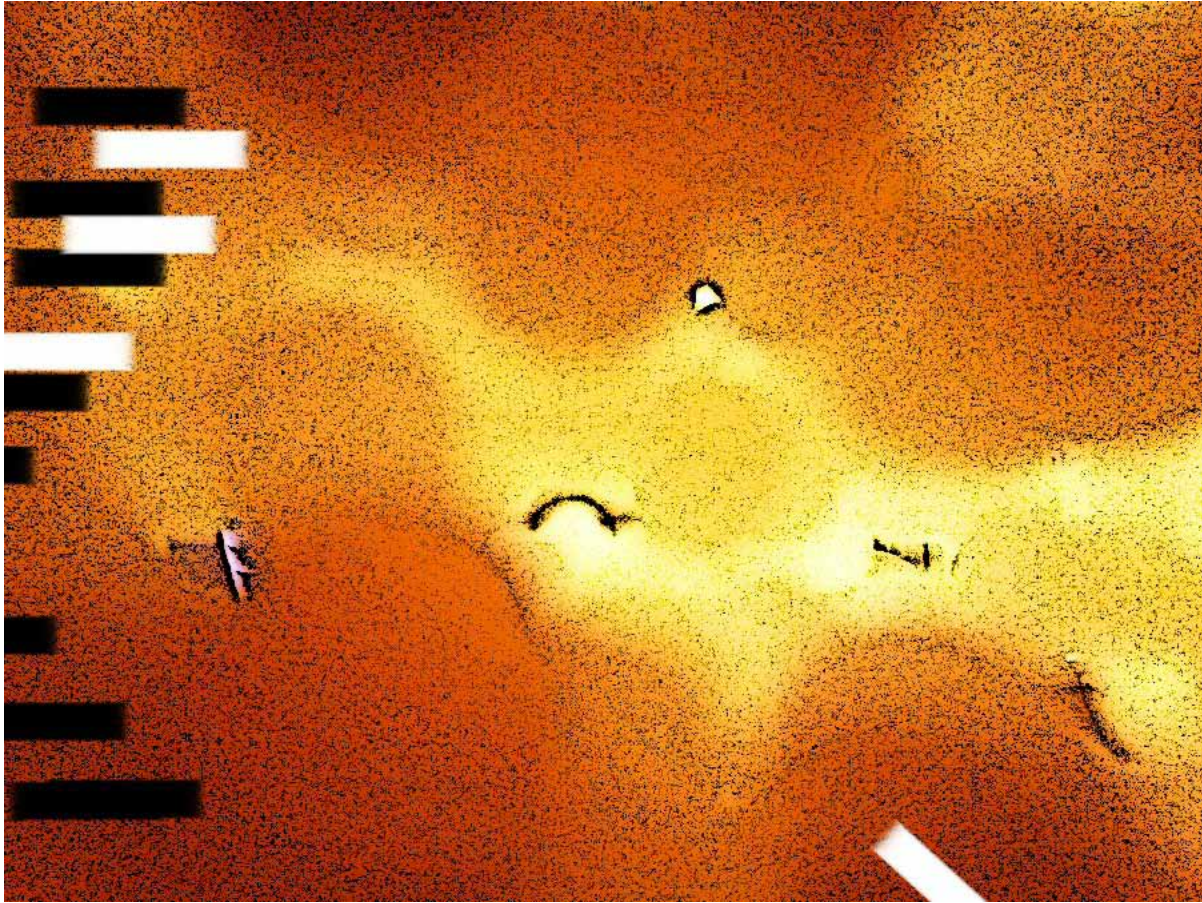
rock bottom adding footnotes

as if i were a yellow submarine stream of consciousness

the art to clear the fog naples yellow

turmoil of graves beyond the river the night gives birth to guitars

a blue vowel seduces me in the forbidden city



Beate Conrad - Ways of Light 07

It begins  
with walking around  
a spacious room  
String Quartet #2



## ***Seasons***

You can't stop them. What's coming or what follows.  
They give, then, without ever looking up,  
take it all back again.

*first day of spring-  
the dog wants out  
then in again*

sunning my picture on the milk carton

egret a month digital-free

changing my plea to dandelions

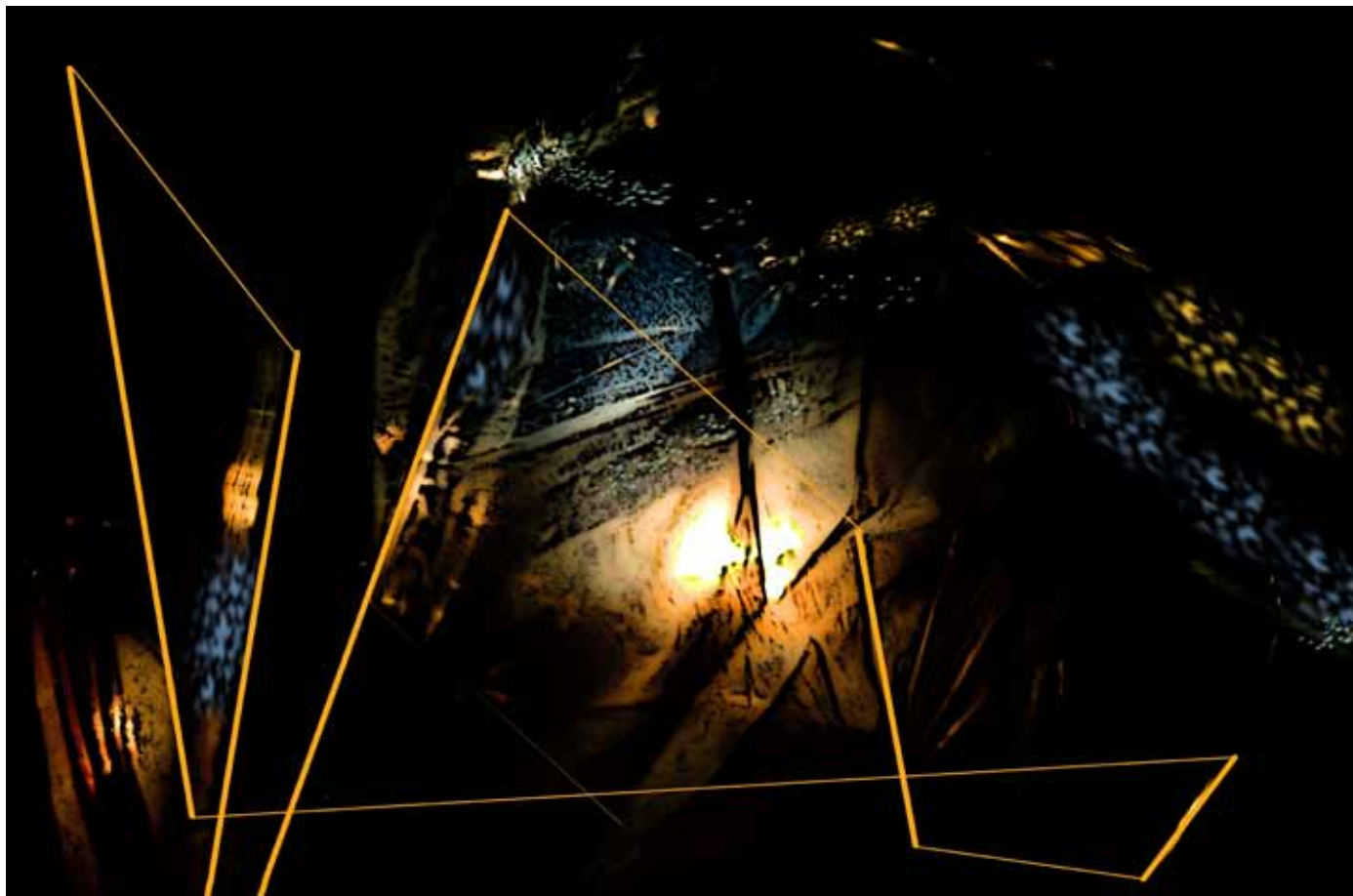
almost pretty after 5,000 square feet

nailing up the new crucifix

rifle breech birth of nations

the scream it owns just before it





Beate Conrad - Ways of Light 08

mounted deer head's gaze as if I wasn't there

all soul's someday dirt in the pockets of my best suit

at the end of the wind his voice

My intended, my ivory, my station, my river, my Voyage Dans La Lune

a moment of silence years too long

mirroring her pain-body goes up a size

winter solstice  
a one-day life throws itself  
against the pane





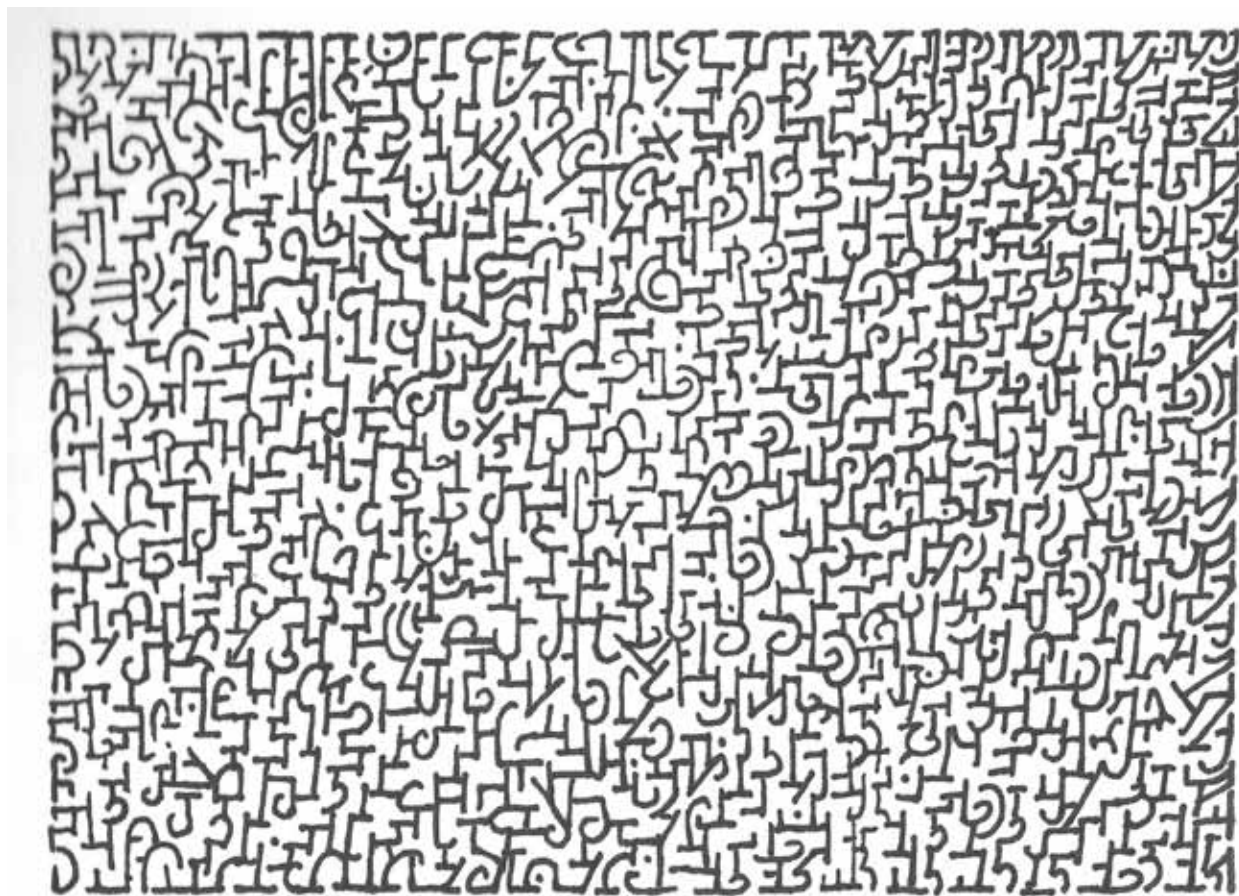
Julie Schwerin

geese returning unpacking the boxes

Venn raindrops winter circles into one

antarctica brain without fog penguins

once upon the bluejay war



Dave Read - asemic web

modern love  
where the seagull lay  
her snuffbox

one tern another burial at sea



on the backs of broken horses

her eyes twitching in phantom nerves

same sex inequality a woman impersonating a woman impersonating a

“the silence is ...”

- a) encroaching
- b) catalytic
- c) feral chic

a homonym of hands rhyming against radar

wasps in the wax of her signature

come denuded  
I have molten tar to spare

calmer under her sixty new pounds of medicine weight

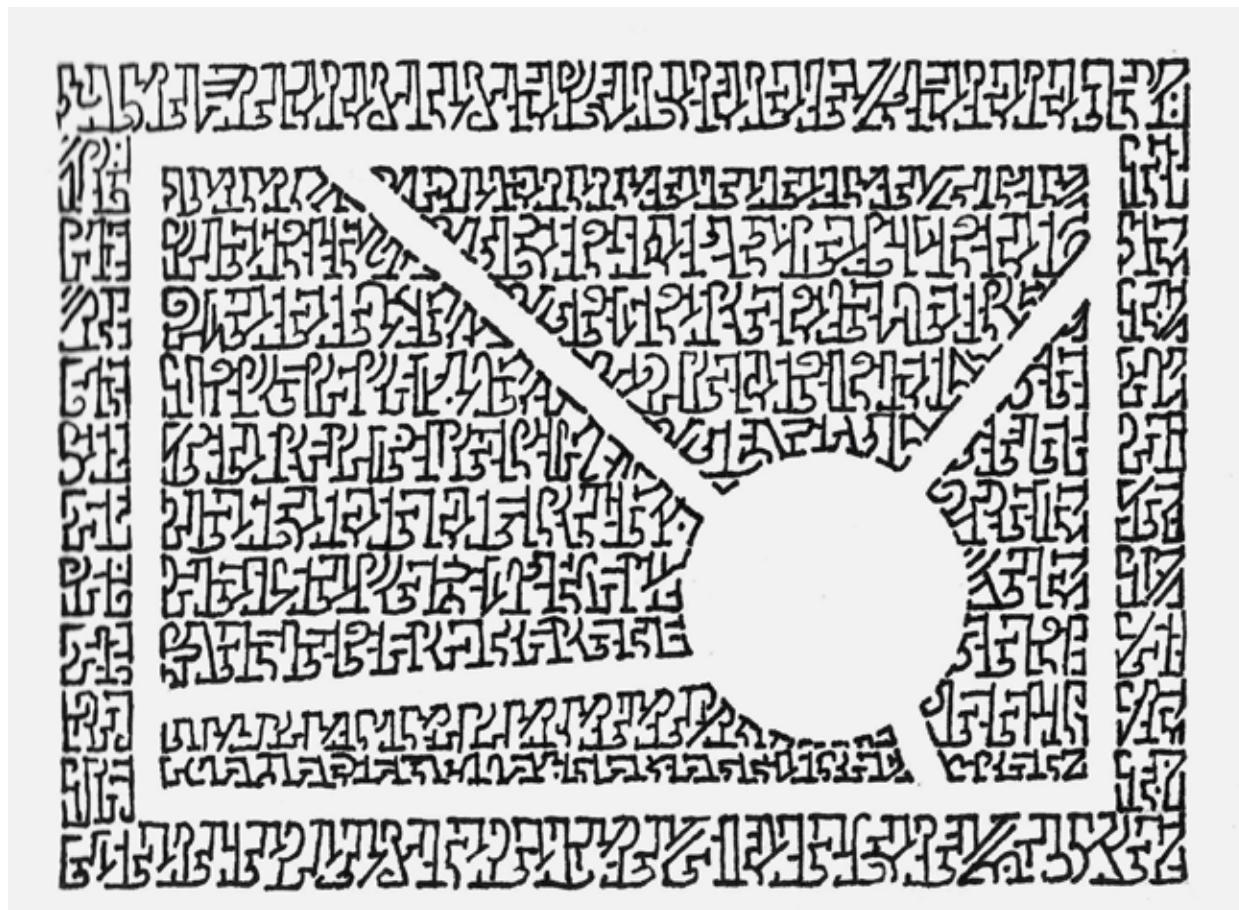


in the sun a cat  
in the cat a rapture

counting down by sevens serotonin surge

we agree sunlit fog

the razor's deeper meaning dreams



blues rising the blue rising rainbow

after thirty five (s)unflower seeds

## *Inner Working*

Bone to nerve  
nerve to bone  
and back

the network  
maps itself

with tics, with twinges  
they let you know

things worked  
and will work

It won't last  
but it will  
return.



*replicant axolotls*

Today @vizogi has shown me  
a bunch of pictures, images  
that might refer to Christianity

or to the fact that China is primed

to dominate gaming, & the in-  
dustry isn't ready. Chaotic lives  
make for a muddled storyline.

*transience*

The man I fell in love with  
nestles inside a beautiful  
hand-painted ceramic pump-  
kin. He has a flat base so won't

topple over as he howls in  
the night riding his motorcycle  
alone along a deserted country  
road in northern Illinois.

*[kn nk]*

know not

/

now knot

### ***Taken into account***

Anthropogenic emissions up to the present are unlikely to become a cause célèbre among the Hmong

since metal ions exist in nearly half the dinosaurs that nearly half of all Americans believe still exist.

*ephemeral artery*

Now that the extensive  
plaque formations that  
once dotted the skyline  
have vanished due to  
regular injections of xy-

lazine, the prevailing line  
of thought at this stage  
is that it won't be long  
before the glo-fi move-  
ment meets a similar fate.

*leger demain*

not  
smoke&mirrors  
making the  
unreal  
real

but  
smoke&dust  
doing  
the re-  
verse

*A / return to / a hunter-gatherer society*

It's one of those radical moves so often proposed but so rarely carried out—

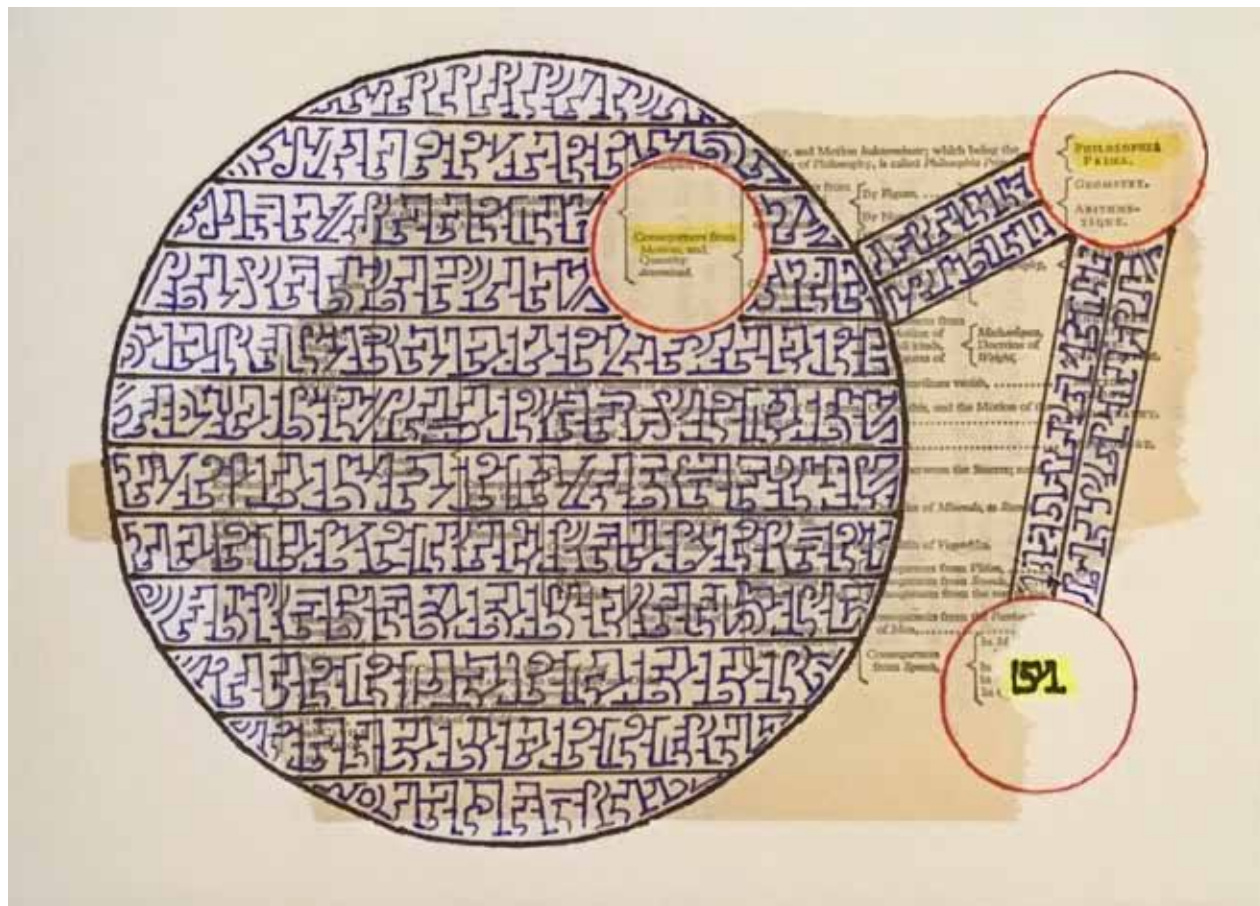
celebrities enchanted by fashion are using lemons to keep their skin guacamole green.

## *Zeitgeist*

Now is the best time to  
emulate the quick brown  
fluegelhorn. Night work.  
Close by the harbor. An  
abundance of talismen.  
Otherwise. Cars act as  
conduits for the varieties

of bleached blond hair.





073 Like a lamp that turns off when it senses motion.

367 To visit a horse race track,  
or step in front of a bus

298    Getting dressed.  
         It'll never be over.

209 Personal desert.

one leg shorter than the other arctic circle

my mirrors screeching with meaty fins and painted on eels

yesterday cherry-picking mark's demonic pigs

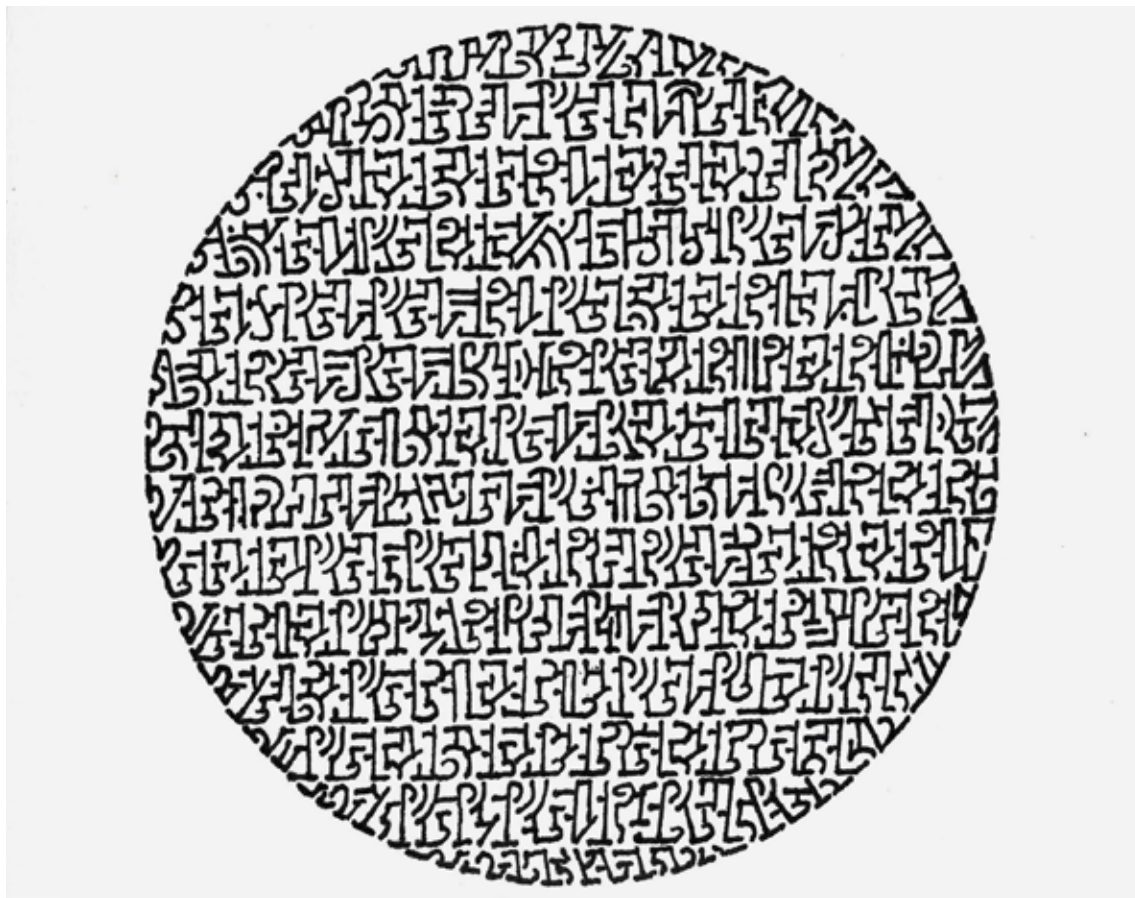


take for example bedrock

i don't recall yelling fire or burning bush

heavy rain genocide in the first book

a gross distortion of reality first born



kind enough not to correct the memory

after ideologies you eat a bowl of spaghetti

ghost hormones the photograph of a smashed pineapple



our shared memory  
a starving clown

the fish that make a home in your skull

Michael O'Brien

mood ring the horse a horse

the tree turning the wind turning the tree

bread basket in a gun the blood river

asked what you saw what you say is just stars

one potato two potato three potato war

***shelf lives***

postulating ice caps dream of quick release

*rug pulled out the floundering polar bear*

ocean surge flirts with prehistoric levels

*petroglyph the head strong wave pattern*

glacier retreats a long-lost hiker defrosting

*after the ego these forsaken bones*



*snake eyes*

slow fashion fingering the rope toggles

*roomful of thighs a taffeta massage*

wayward peeks lost in the topography

*catwalking over the line pussy foot*

break room reassembling the pieces

*cigarette butt the contour of a heel*



getting served  
daily morning  
coffee and don'ts

struggle in occupied cashmere

black bee hexagoning the blue hour into honey

woman as war each turn of the trinity

Another reverie born beside a train window.

Oh breeze don't try to be the exception!



I used to walk like a drifter but the path has aged.

I have slowed down to feign sanity.

### ***Utterance***

I once saw a sparrow pecking at leftover chicken bones thrown into the street. I still wonder if that sparrow heard and understood what the bones had to say.

### ***The moon***

For a short time, I was a swan. Then I became your father. I rescued you from the ocean and, until your birth, kept you buried in my thigh. Now, as I nap in a chair seated by my wife's bed, I realize that your son is the moon, softly rising between her legs.

### *Hospitality*

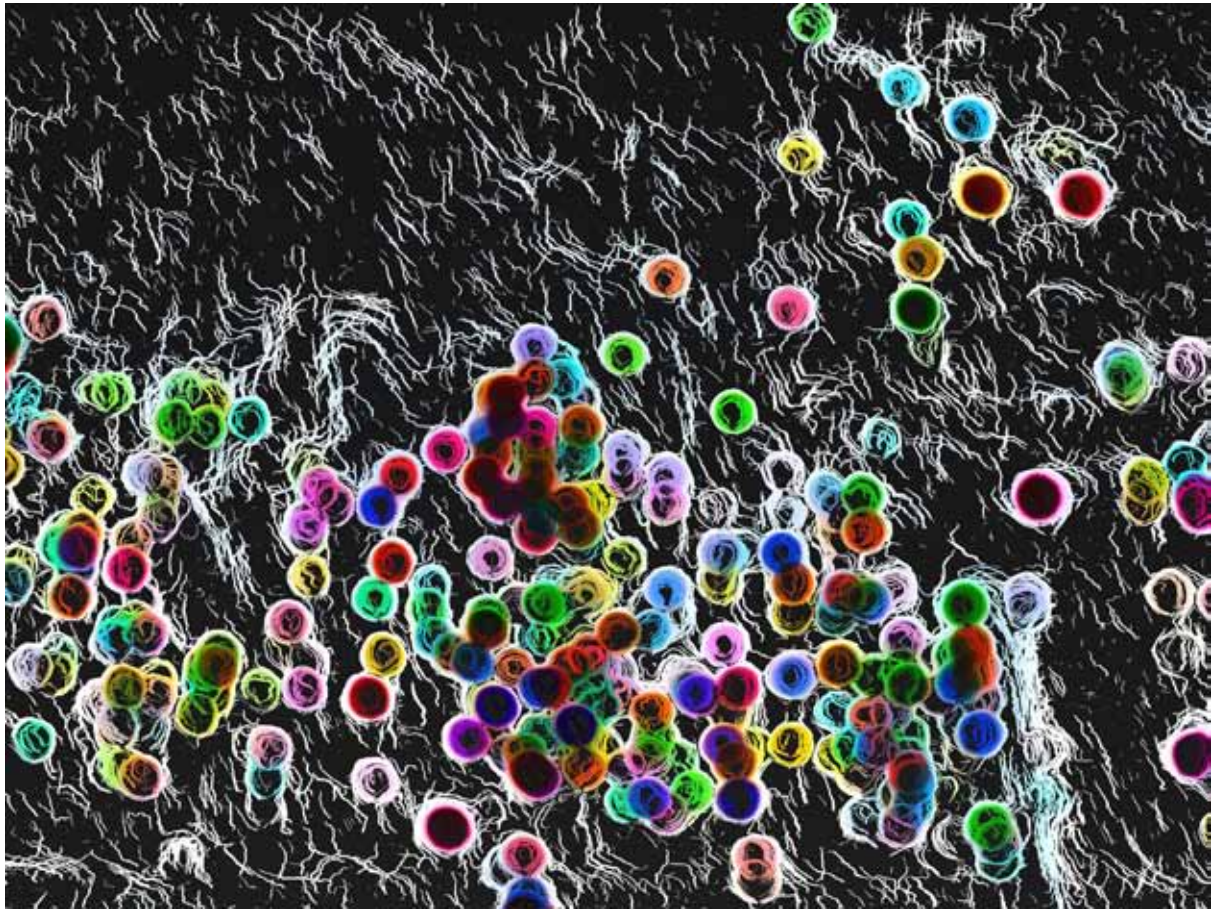
The window, from which one can see heaps of trash,  
cars randomly parked, and an abandoned doghouse,  
even when closed lets in rain.

### *Domestic Triangulation*

Every morning my husband licks the lip of his favourite  
cup, the one dressed in feathers torn from my skin.

little death —  
plucked from a side plate  
he swallows me whole

*An ekphrastic haibun based on Méret Oppenheim's sculpture 'Breakfast in Fur'  
(1936)*



Debbie Strange

hacking the wilderness glitches with pixels



in the crux of the matter  
maggots reach marrow

until the black rose in the mirror certifies monotony

space watering a choice

outside the sky within roles



Julie Schwerin

a pod, a pawn

like one word  
of salt

red  
cargo pants

the kudzu

version of  
the waltz

sequence of  
deer

red  
at half-mast



the iron hyphen

orange  
mismatched

the book of white

etched  
starfish

the noon bell

a blue spoon

right where  
a Trappist monk  
left it

the marionette's  
half-frown

rivers have  
rightfootedness

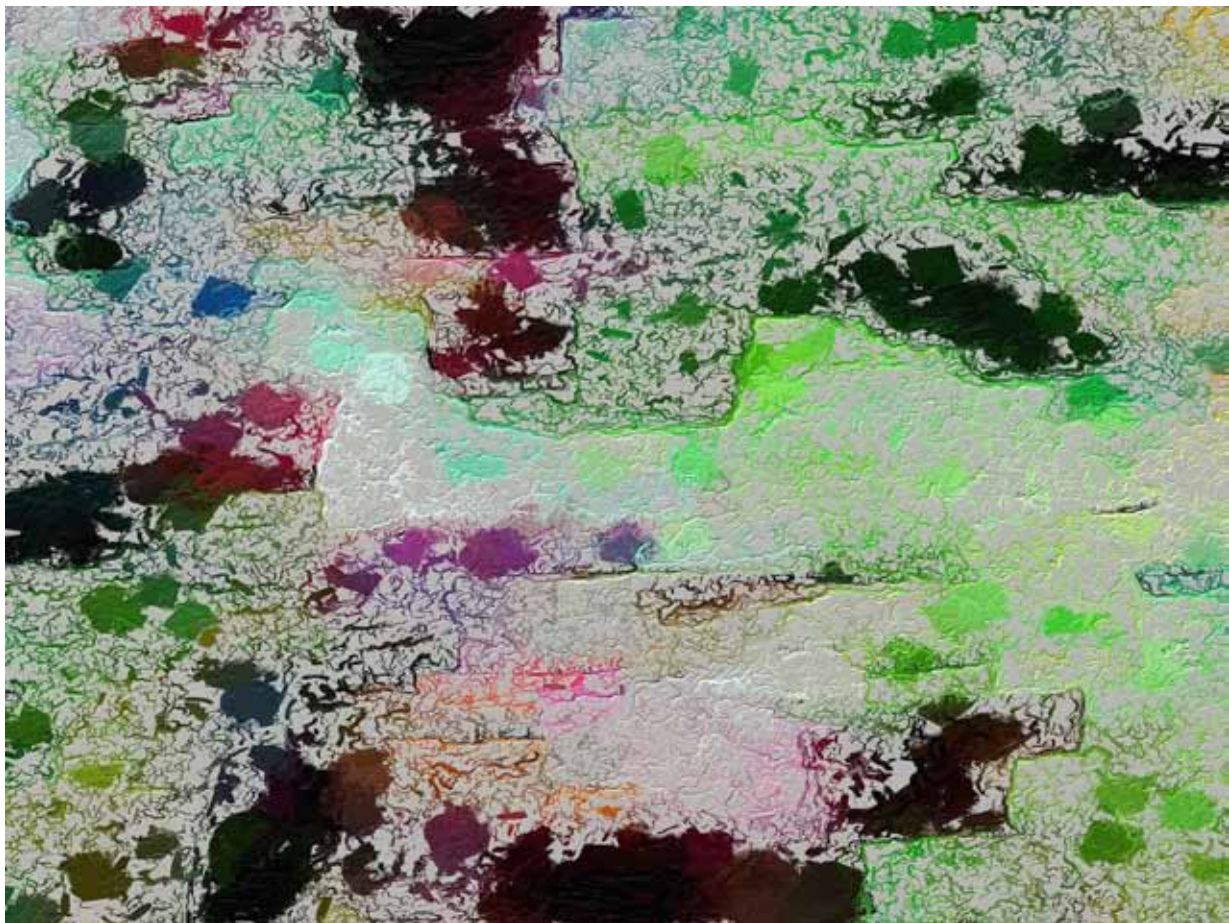
purple as  
moods

a black-eyed susan

a post  
could  
cactus

color  
in the tooth

brown bag  
at ocean's end



Debbie Strange



dad in soiled whites disappears into a stranger's canvas bag

final moments odors gather in single file

men's room my catheter's loneliness

tamalpais crematorium  
searching the ashes  
for his stutter

telemetry of sorrow  
cogs clogged  
with inert dervishes

money poisoning my well enough alone

Who are you? A mirror's question never means the same thing twice; no two you's use that reflection. You too. Two u's in ululate sing the same one's gone.

*out too long*

these coins are COLD.

i hand Lizzie over to the clerk,  
maybe she'll lay  
in the register awhile,  
thawing her frostbitten face  
as the beaver, caribou and polar bear  
stifle snarky comments



deep autumn silence in the landline phone

fishing for clouds in the shrinking lake

water is a verb as it falls

truth chamber  
the eyes of an owl



Julie Schwerin

a  
tu  
lip  
pet  
al  
to  
the  
to  
uch  
feels  
like

ONE NOTE  
ONE NOTE  
ONE NOTE

of  
a  
trum  
pet

Stephen Nelson

wood  
in the

water  
in the

way in

in the indeterminacy of othering of i



defeated by the density of objects

*Kyiv*

I melt  
into the vistas over the Dnieper:  
neon algae  
proliferating on the bank

***The too-dark, narrow painting just to the left of the  
altarpiece of Mary of the Crown of Thorns***

Treble of stairs  
swept as if by a rapid  
of sacramental wine  
Or that same treble, bled  
of a bath of dark petals

Editor:

Johannes S. H. Bjerg

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